

CLAIM LISTING

1. (original) A method for sending an article in a postal system, said method comprising the steps of:
 - causing an identifier to be associated with information in a database;
 - marking an article with the identifier;
 - enabling the identifier after the occurrence of a predetermined event; and
 - checking whether the identifier is enabled before delivering the article.
2. (original) The method of claim 1, wherein the identifier serves as postage for the article such that the article is only delivered when the identifier is enabled.
3. (original) The method of claim 1, wherein the identifier is unique to the article.
4. (original) The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of distributing the article in commerce before enabling the identifier.
5. (original) The method of claim 1, wherein said article is selected from the group consisting of magazine inserts and warranty cards.
6. (original) The method of claim 1, further comprising the steps of:
 - reading addressee information from the article; and
 - comparing the addressee information against address information associated with theidentifier in the database.
7. (original) The method of claim 6, further comprising the step of:
 - signaling when the addressee information differs from the address information associated with the identifier in the database.

8. (original) The method of claim 6, further comprising the step of:
maintaining records associated with the identifier comparing step.

9. (currently amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the enabling step involves including an indication within a the database that the identifier is valid, such that a later check of the identifier within the database returns a result showing that the identifier is valid.

10. (original) The method of claim 1, further comprising the steps of:
delivering the article; and
charging a payer for sending the article upon the delivery of the article.

11. (currently amended) A method for sending an article in a postal system, said method comprising the steps of:

causing an identifier to be associated with address information in a database;
marking an article with the identifier;

enabling the identifier after the occurrence of a predetermined event; and
checking whether the identifier is enabled and comparing the address

information associated with the identifier with addressee information on the article before delivering the article.

12. (original) The method of claim 11, wherein the identifier serves as postage for the article such that the article is only delivered when the identifier is enabled.

13. (original) The method of claim 11, wherein the identifier is unique to the article.

14. (original) The method of claim 11, further comprising the step of:
distributing the article in commerce before enabling the identifier.

15. (original) The method of claim 11, wherein said article is selected from the group consisting of magazine inserts and warranty cards.

16. (original) The method of claim 11, further comprising the steps of:
reading addressee information from the article; and
comparing the addressee information against address information associated with the identifier in the database.

17. (original) The method of claim 16, further comprising the step of:
signaling when the addressee information differs from the address information associated with the identifier in the database.

18. (original) The method of claim 16, further comprising the step of:
maintaining records associated with the identifier comparing step.

19. (currently amended) The method of claim 11, wherein the enabling step involves including an indication within a the database that the identifier is valid, such that a later check of the identifier within the database returns a result showing that the identifier is valid.

20. (original) The method of claim 11, further comprising the steps of:
delivering the article; and
charging a payer for sending the article upon the delivery of the article.

21. (currently amended) A system for tracking an article having an identifier and a recipient address, said system comprising:
a reader configured to read information from said article;
a database including identifier data associated with at least one identifier; and
means for retrieving data from the database and reviewing the data;

means for enabling said identifier after the occurrence of a predetermined event;
and
means for verifying enablement of said identifier before delivering the article.

22. (original) The system for tracking an article of claim 21, wherein said database further comprises data relating one or more identifiers to one or more recipient addresses and said system further comprises means for comparing the recipient address on said article against the identifier data in the database.

23. (currently amended) The system for tracking an article of claim 22, wherein said means for comparing the recipient address on said article comprises hardware configured to facilitate a comparison of the an addressee indicator against the identifier data in the database.

24. (currently amended) The system for tracking an article of claim 22, wherein said means for comparing the recipient address on said article comprises software configured to facilitate a comparison of the an addressee indicator against the identifier data in the database.

25. (original) The system for tracking an article of claim 22, further comprising means for storing the results of the comparison of the recipient address against the identifier data in the database.

26. (cancelled)

27. (original) The system for tracking an article of claim 21, wherein said reader comprises means for reading the identifier on said article.

28. (original) The system for tracing an article of claim 21, further comprising means for charging a payer upon delivery of the article to the recipient of the article.

29. (original) The system for tracking an article of claim 21, further comprising means for recording data in relation to operation of the system.

30. (original) The system for tracking an article of claim 21, wherein said reader may read information which identifies a source of the article.

31. (cancelled)

32. (cancelled)